

Information Services Policy

All library staff have a role in providing information to patrons, but the primary responsibility rests with the Adult/Young Adult Services Librarians and Children's Department Staff. As a general rule, patrons with information questions should be referred to such library staff. A professionally trained Librarian will be available during all library business hours to provide direct personal assistance to patrons seeking information in person, by telephone, mail, fax, e-mail, or other means of electronic communication.

The goal of reference service is to provide unbiased information services to library patrons without regard to age, race, creed, sex, or disability. Each patron's questions will be given equal consideration and answers to such questions will be provided as accurately and completely as possible within a reasonable time frame. The needs of patrons will be treated with respect and courtesy and the confidentiality of patron questions will be maintained.

Information Desk Guidelines

- 1) Accurate statistics will be collected as required by the Illinois State Library Standards for Libraries.
- 2) If a staff member has a problem working with a patron, this patron may be referred to a Coordinator or any other supervisor. Staff members should also follow the Library's Disruptive Behavior Policy procedures as needed.
- 3) If the requested information cannot be located within 24 hours, the patron should be notified of the status of the request and appropriate referrals to other resources should be made.
- 4) Patrons may be referred to another library after verification is made that the material is currently available at that library. An offer to place a hold on an item in the automated catalog may be made to any library card holder in good standing. An offer to provide interlibrary loan service may be made to any Moline Public Library card holder, according to established system protocol.
- 5) To provide the most accurate and authoritative answers possible, library staff should avoid personal opinions (the exception being Reader's Advisory services, which by nature, are personal suggestions). Rather, staff should rely upon information obtained from

reputable sources. The source of an answer should be cited.

- 6) While staff are able to provide materials and referrals to professionals in the following fields, staff are not able to give medical, legal, or tax advice.
- 7) Informal library instruction takes place naturally as an integral part of answering most reference questions. In addition to this informal process, more formal library instruction may be provided by library tours and classes in the use of the library's materials. Requests for tours should be made to a Coordinator at least one week in advance of the requested tour date.
- 8) Exhaustive literature searches will not be undertaken for patrons by Library staff. Generally, up to 5 items on a topic will be pulled and held for a patron. Telephone service, by its nature, will be more limited than in person service.
- 9) Library staff will assist patrons with computer/electronic device questions. Limits may be placed on computer/electronic device assistance provided to patrons at the discretion of library staff.

*Board Approved 07/99
Revised 05/18*

Next Review Date 05/20